

METHODOLOGY FOR CONDUCTING ON-SITE VISITS^{1/}

I. SCOPE OF THE METHODOLOGY, NATURE, AND OBJECTIVES OF ON-SITE VISITS, AND EQUAL AND IMPARTIAL TREATMENT

1. Scope of the Methodology. This Methodology governs the preparation and execution of on-site visits, as well as the study of the information they produce and other issues related to them, pursuant to the provisions of the Report of Buenos Aires, Article 33 of the Rules of Procedure and Other Provisions of the Committee of Experts of the Mechanism for Follow-up on Implementation of the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (hereinafter, respectively, “the Rules of Procedure,” “the Committee,” “the MESICIC,” and “the Convention”), and recommendation No. 6 of the Third Meeting of the Conference of States Parties of the MESICIC.^{2/}

2. Nature of on-site visits. On-site visits constitute a stage in and an integral part of the Committee’s process of analyzing the implementation, within a Round of Review (hereinafter, “the round”), of the corresponding selected provisions of the Convention and of the recommendations formulated to each of the States Party in the previous round(s) regarding which follow-up is being performed, in compliance with the terms of the Report of Buenos Aires, Article 33 of the Rules of Procedure, and the decisions adopted by the Committee in connection with the respective Round.

3. Objectives of on-site visits. On-site visits have the following objectives, in the following order of priority:

a) To refine, clarify, or complement the information provided by the country under review in its response to the questionnaire regarding the implementation of the Convention provisions selected for review in the corresponding Round and of the recommendations that have been formulated to it by the Committee in the previous round(s) on which follow-up is being conducted.

b) To ensure that the Committee has objective and complete information for the consideration and adoption of the corresponding country report and that those reports are appropriate and useful for the country under review and to contribute to the strengthening of cooperation against corruption within the framework of the Convention and the MESICIC.

1. This Methodology for conducting on-site visits was approved in its entirety by the Committee of Experts of the MESICIC on March 25, 2011, within the framework of its Eighteenth Meeting.

2. The Recommendations of the Third Meeting of the Conference of States Parties of the MESICIC (document MESICIC/CEP-III/doc.4/10 rev. 1) are available at: http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/cepIII_recom_en.pdf

c) To reveal potential difficulties in the implementation of the Convention provisions under review and/or of the recommendations formulated to it by the Committee in the previous round(s) on which follow-up is being conducted, as well as areas in which the country under review may require or could benefit from technical cooperation.

d) To facilitate the obtaining of information related to good practices that have been identified by the country under review in the topics under analysis, and the awareness of which could be of use to other States Parties, and thus contribute to strengthened cooperation and exchanges of information and experiences among the States Parties.

e) To provide the country under review with the opportunity to benefit from or to request technical assistance, according to its needs, from either the OAS or other international agencies.

4. Equal and impartial treatment. All of the MESICIC states parties have the right to be consulted as to whether or not they grant their consent for an on-site visit to be conducted within the framework of a Round and, should that consent be granted in accordance with what is provided in the following section, to receive equal and impartial treatment in the preparation and execution of the corresponding on-site visit and in the consideration of the information arising therefrom, pursuant to the provisions and terms established in this Methodology, in the Rules of Procedure, and in the schedule and other decisions adopted by the Committee in connection with the respective Round.

II. CONSENT OF COUNTRIES UNDER REVIEW FOR ON-SITE VISITS TO BE CONDUCTED

5. Information on consent for an on-site visit to be conducted. All States Parties shall officially inform the Technical Secretariat of the MESICIC (hereinafter, the “Technical Secretariat”), in writing and through their Permanent Missions to the OAS, no later than the Committee meeting immediately prior to the commencement of a new Round, whether or not they grant their consent for the corresponding on-site visits to be conducted during that new Round.

For that purpose, at least two months prior to the start of the Committee meeting referred to in the previous paragraph, the Technical Secretariat will send a communication to each of the States Parties, through their Permanent Missions to the OAS, with copies to the corresponding Lead Experts to the Committee,^{3/} asking that they officially inform whether those countries grant their consent for an on-site visit to be conducted as part of the following Round.

The Lead Experts shall take every measure available and pursue all good offices to ensure that their respective countries respond officially, within the deadline indicated in the first paragraph of this provision, regarding whether or not they grant their consent for the corresponding on-site visit to be conducted as a part of the following Round.

6. Absence of an official response from the country under review. In the event that the Technical Secretariat does not receive an official response from the country under review, in writing and through its Permanent Mission to the OAS, within the deadline indicated in the preceding provision, it shall be understood that the state has not granted its consent for the corresponding on-site visit to be conducted.

3. For all purposes in this Methodology, terms referring to the male gender, such as “he” or “his,” shall be understood as also embracing the corresponding female gender terms, such as “she” or “her,” as applicable.

7. Procedure depending on the response regarding consent for the on-site visit to be conducted. If a country under review gives its consent for an on-site visit to be conducted, all matters relating to its preparation and execution shall be coordinated according to the following provisions and to the schedule and other decisions adopted by the Committee in connection with the corresponding Round.

If a country under review has communicated that it does not grant its consent for the corresponding on-site visit to be conducted, or has not replied officially as provided for in provision 6 of this Methodology, the other steps in that state's review process shall continue, pursuant to the Rules of Procedure, the schedule, and the other decisions adopted by the Committee in connection with the corresponding round.

III. PREPARATION AND EXECUTION OF THE ON-SITE VISIT

8. Consideration of the nature and objectives of on-site visits in their preparation and execution. The nature and objectives of on-site visits must always be kept in mind during their preparation and execution, in accordance with provisions 3 and 4 of this Methodology.

Consequently, the representatives of the Member States of the Preliminary Review Subgroup (hereinafter, "the Subgroup") and of the country under review, and the Technical Secretariat, must at all times bear in mind that on-site visits are neither autonomous nor independent from the review process of which those visits form a part, and that neither during their execution nor upon their conclusion will statements be given regarding the substantive issues considered during the visits; such statements are only to be made by the plenary of the Committee through the country report adopted at the conclusion of the review process, in accordance with the terms of the Rules of Procedure, the Methodology, and the other decisions adopted in connection with the respective round, bearing in mind that the reports from the previous Rounds represent basic working documents.

9. Timeliness, duration, date, and venue of on-site visits. On-site visits are to be carried out during the period established for them to take place in the schedule adopted by the Committee for the respective round.

On-site visits shall have a maximum duration of five days, depending on the complexity and number of topics to be studied, the meetings required to address them, and other organizational or logistical details pertaining to each country under review. The duration of each on-site visit shall be agreed upon during the exchanges and coordination referred to in provisions 13 to 16 of this Methodology and it shall be reflected in the final agenda of the on-site visit.

The date of each on-site visit shall be defined in accordance with the terms of provision 12(b) of this Methodology.

On-site visits shall take place in the capital city of the country under review or in other cities when strictly necessary for meeting the objectives of the corresponding on-site visit in accordance with the terms of provision 3 of this Methodology.

10. Contact authority for coordination of the on-site visit. When a country under review grants its consent for an on-site visit to be carried out, that country's Lead Expert to the Committee shall serve as the contact authority for the coordination of all matters related to the preparation and execution of the on-site visit, without prejudice to the fact that attending to an on-site visit is the responsibility of the country under review.

The Lead Expert of the country under review may appoint an official to support him in discharging his responsibilities as the contact authority for the purposes described in the previous paragraph and, if he does so, he shall inform the Technical Secretariat of that decision and communicate the name, position, and contact details (telephone, e-mail address, and fax number) of the corresponding official. In that event, the respective information must be furnished no later than during the week following the date on which contact is established between the Technical Secretariat and the corresponding Lead Expert.

Each country under review shall ensure that it has a single Lead Expert assigned to the Committee, without prejudice to any alternate experts, according to the terms of Article 2 of the Rules of Procedure and that the Technical Secretariat has his updated contact details (name, position, e-mail address, telephone and fax numbers). Any change in these details must be reported to the Technical Secretariat by no later than in the communication in which the country under review officially transmits its consent for the on-site visit to be carried out as provided for in provision 5 of this Methodology, or immediately after the change occurs, should it take place subsequent to the date of that communication.

11. Representation of the Member States of the Preliminary Review Subgroup during the on-site visit. The Lead Expert to the Committee or the expert appointed in his place, shall participate in the on-site visit, in representation of each Member State of the Subgroup, according to the terms of provision 12(a) of this Methodology.

When a Member State of the Subgroup fully covers the traveling expenses of its Lead Expert or of the expert appointed in his place to attend the on-site visit, it may include, at its own expense, other alternate experts as part of its delegation to the corresponding on-site visit.

The members of the Subgroups shall consult among themselves in order to ensure, to the extent that is possible, that their representatives on the on-site visit offer a range of expertise in light of the topics under review in the corresponding Round.

12. Coordination of organizational aspects of the on-site visit. In accordance with the schedule and other decisions adopted in connection with the corresponding Round, the Technical Secretariat shall:

a) Contact the Lead Experts from the two States that make up the Subgroup in order to confirm their participation in the on-site visit or, if that is not the case, for them to officially inform the name, position, and details (e-mail address and telephone and fax numbers) of the expert who is to attend in their place and of any other expert who is to attend the on-site visit in accordance with the second paragraph of provision 11 of this Methodology. The respective information must be provided no later than during the week following the date on which contact is established between the Technical Secretariat and the corresponding Lead Expert.

b) Define, with the contact authority of the country under review and in consultation with the experts from the two Member States of the Subgroup, the days on which the on-site visit is to take place, according to the period defined for its execution on the schedule for the Round. Once the dates on which the on-site visit is to be held have been agreed upon, those dates shall remain firm.

c) Coordinate, with the contact authority of the country under review, all the organizational and logistical aspects of the on-site visit, as provided for in this Methodology.

d) Coordinate, with the respective experts from the two Member States of the Subgroup, all the organizational and logistical aspects of their participation in the on-site visit.

13. Initial proposal for the agenda of the on-site visit. The Technical Secretariat shall prepare and submit for the consideration and approval of the members of the subgroup, a document with a proposal of topics identified as being relevant for consideration during the on-site visit and an agenda of possible meetings for dealing with them.

For the preparation of this proposal:

a) The basis shall be the response of the country under review to the questionnaire for the corresponding Round, the country report(s) from the Round(s) on which follow-up related to the implementation of recommendations is being performed, the documents submitted by civil society organizations according to the terms of the Rules of Procedure, and any other relevant information gathered by the Technical Secretariat or submitted to it by the country under review or the members of the Subgroup up the date on which the proposal referred to in this provision is prepared.

b) Fulfillment of the objectives of on-site visits established in provision 3 of this Methodology shall be borne in mind at all times.

c) As appropriate, proposals shall be made for meetings with representatives from agencies of the different branches of government and the prevention, investigation, prosecution, and oversight bodies with competencies in relation to the topics that are to be addressed.

d) When considered necessary or convenient for dealing with the topics previously identified as relevant, a proposal may be made for the simultaneous participation at certain meetings of representatives from various institutions directly related to those topics.

e) The meeting(s) with civil society organization(s), in accordance with provision 26 shall be included and/or, if considered useful for the objectives of the on-site visit, a proposal may be made for other civil society organizations and/or private sector organizations, professional associations, academics or researchers to be invited to meetings, as provided for in provision 27 of this Methodology.

f) Suggestions shall be offered on the organization of the meetings, the times at which they may be held, and the time that may be necessary for them to be properly executed.

14. Coordination and definition of the agenda with the country under review. The Technical Secretariat shall send to the country under review, through its Lead Expert to the Committee, the initial proposal of the agenda for the on-site visit adopted by the members of the Subgroup in accordance with what is provided in the previous provision.

The country under review shall promptly study the proposal and, if it agrees with it, it shall complete it with the relevant details such as the names of the people who are to participate in the meetings and, if applicable, their titles and the agencies or organizations that they represent, together with the proposed schedule for those meetings and other necessary information, and it shall coordinate, with the Technical Secretariat, the details to be addressed in order to define a final agenda for the on-site visit.

In the event that the country under review has comments or suggestions for changes or additions to the initial proposal that it receives for the agenda of the on-site visit, it shall make the amendments it deems appropriate and return the revised proposed agenda to the Technical Secretariat. From that moment, a swift and fluid exchange shall take place between the country under review and the Technical Secretariat, in consultation with the members of the Subgroup, leading to an agreement on the final agenda for the on-site visit, including relevant details such as the names of the people and, when appropriate, the positions of the representatives of the institutions or organizations who will participate in the meetings, along with the proposed schedule and other necessary information.

The country under review, the members of the Subgroup, and the Technical Secretariat, shall give the highest priority to responding swiftly to communications received during the process of coordinating and defining the agenda for the on-site visit, thus ensuring compliance with the terms established in provision 16 of this Methodology.

15. Issues to be borne in mind in the preparation, definition and execution of the agenda of the on-site visit. In order to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the on-site visit, the following issues shall be taken into account in the preparation, definition and execution of its agenda:

- a) The meetings must focus on the specific topics previously identified as being relevant for consideration at each meeting.
- b) The country under review shall take the necessary steps in order to ensure the participation at the meetings by officials with direct and practical knowledge of the topics identified for consideration at each meeting.
- c) The officials or representatives of institutions and organizations participating in the meetings must be previously informed of the background and scope of the respective meeting in which they are to participate and of the specific points that are to be addressed.
- d) The necessary steps must be taken in order to take advantage of the on-site visit and the time available for it in the most efficient way possible, including, *inter alia*, the following measures:
 - i. Ensure that all meeting participants arrive punctually and that the times provided in the agenda are complied with.
 - ii. Organize the meeting schedule and the activities planned for the visit in such a way as to take maximum advantage of the time available.
 - iii. Consider holding several meetings at the same venue, when that is possible without affecting their objectives.

e) The Technical Secretariat shall moderate the meetings held during the execution of the on-site visit, and it shall strive to ensure that all the topics planned for each are considered and that the schedule provided in the agenda is complied with.

16. Deadline for agreeing on the agenda and organizational aspects of the on-site visit and pre-visit communications. The final agenda of the on-site visit and all the organizational and logistical aspects that are to be defined with the country under review and/or with the members of the Subgroup shall be fully agreed on, and all the pertinent steps shall have been taken, no later than two weeks before the date on which the on-site visit is to commence.

During the two weeks prior to the start date of the on-site visit, the Technical Secretariat shall communicate with the country under review and with the experts who are to participate therein in representation of the members of the Subgroup, in order to review and confirm with them all those relevant matters related to the agenda and the execution of the on-site visit.

17. Missing or relevant information or documents. The document containing the proposal of topics identified as relevant for consideration during the on-site visit and the agenda of possible meetings for dealing with them, described in provision 13 of this Methodology, shall also indicate the information or documents that are missing from the response given by the country under review to the questionnaire for the Round or that are required in connection with the topics under review. The country under review shall provide that information, through the Technical Secretariat, no later than one month before the date on which the on-site visit is to commence.

18. Responsibilities of the Lead Expert of the country under review. The Lead Expert of the country under review shall have the following responsibilities in connection with the preparation and execution of the on-site visit:

a) Coordinating, with the respective authorities and with the Technical Secretariat, all matters related to defining the date and agenda of the on-site visit, and all its organizational and logistical aspects, as provided for in this Methodology.

b) Ensuring that all the representatives of the institutions and organizations that are to participate at the meetings held within the framework of the on-site visit confirm their attendance and arrive punctually at those meetings.

c) Informing, with adequate advance notice, the specific objectives of the meetings in question to the representatives of the institutions and organizations that are to participate in the meetings held within the framework of the on-site visit, forwarding to them for that purpose and in advance, the relevant information from the agenda of the on-site visit identifying the relevant topics that are to be considered at the corresponding meeting.

d) Participating in all the meetings held with state institutions during the on-site visit, and coordinating any matters that may arise in order to follow up on them.

e) Coordinating, with the Technical Secretariat, the provision of the support required from the country under review for the organization and execution of the meetings referred to in section IV of this Methodology.

In discharging these responsibilities, the Lead Expert of the country under review may, if necessary, receive support from the official appointed for the purpose in accordance with provision 10, second paragraph, of this Methodology.

19. Responsibilities of the experts participating in the on-site visit in representation of the Subgroup Member States. The Lead Experts to the Committee, or those appointed in their place to participate in the on-site visit pursuant to the terms of provision 12(a) of this Methodology, shall have the following responsibilities during the preparation and execution of the respective on-site visit:

- a) Responding, in a timely fashion, to inquiries made by the Technical Secretariat regarding the process of defining the agenda of the on-site visit and the organizational and logistical aspects related to their participation therein, bearing in mind the terms of provision 14, final paragraph, and 16 of this Methodology.
- b) Preparing for the on-site visit by, *inter alia*, giving due consideration to the background documents for the visit made available to them by the Technical Secretariat.
- c) Making the arrangements for which they have competence to ensure their participation during the entire time anticipated for the on-site visit and avoiding the emergence of last-minute difficulties caused by a lack of foresight.
- d) Participating actively, constructively, objectively, and impartially in the meetings held during the on-site visit and, in this regard:
 - i. Bearing in mind at all times the purposes of the MESICIC and, in particular, of the on-site visits, in accordance with the terms of provision 3 of this Methodology.
 - ii. Formulating questions, insisting on clarifications, or seeking precision regarding information they deem important in connection with the topics addressed at the meetings.
 - iii. Complying with the schedule provided for in the agenda and contributing to the efficient use of time within the framework of the meetings.
 - iv. Focusing on the specific topics identified for study at each meeting and, consequently, directing their questions to specify, clarify, or supplement the information furnished by the country under review in connection with those topics.
 - v. Studying the information received at the meetings in an objective and impartial manner, refraining from making comparisons with their countries of origin and from expressing personal opinions or value judgments on the topics addressed.
- e) Endeavoring, to the extent possible, and taking budgetary restrictions into account, that the experts who participate in the on-site visit also participate in the Subgroup and Plenary discussions on the draft report for the country under review.

20. Follow-up of topics studied at the meetings. The Technical Secretariat shall keep a record of the areas that require follow-up in connection with the topics considered at the meetings and of the additional information requested during the on-site visit that, exceptionally, could not be furnished at the time.

At the conclusion of the meetings on each day of the on-site visit, the Technical Secretariat shall organize an informal meeting with the members of the Subgroup, to exchange preliminary points of view on the topics addressed at those meetings.

At the end of the on-site visit, a meeting shall be held, to be attended by the Subgroup experts, the Technical Secretariat, and the Lead Expert of the country under review and/or the official appointed in his place in accordance with provision 10, second paragraph, of this Methodology. That meeting shall identify, if necessary, the information that, exceptionally, the country under review is still to submit through the Technical Secretariat and the deadline within which it is to do so, and it shall also coordinate any other pending matters arising from the on-site visit.

21. Aide-mémoire of the on-site visit. Bearing in mind the exchanges that take place during the on-site visit, including the meetings referred to in the last two paragraphs of the previous provision, the Technical Secretariat shall prepare a summarized *aide-mémoire* of the on-site visit, which shall include the relevant references to the information arising there from, to be taken into account in the preparation of the corresponding draft preliminary report. It shall forward this *aide-mémoire* to the members of the Subgroup for their consideration and approval.

On the basis of the draft *aide-mémoire*, the members of the Subgroup should provide the Technical Secretariat with their analysis of the topics under review, with regard to the objectives of the visit, as set out in provision 3 in Section I.

The members of the Subgroup shall convey to the Technical Secretariat their approval of and/or observations on the *aide-mémoire* within the two weeks following the date on which it is sent to them. In the event that the Technical Secretariat receives no response on the *aide-mémoire* from any of the members of the Subgroup within this deadline, it shall be understood that that member is in agreement with the text thereof.

22. Inclusion on the schedule for the Round. The schedules adopted by the Committee for each Round shall include the stages corresponding to the preparation, execution, and follow-up on on-site visits.

23. Absence of experts representing the Subgroup Member States caused by force majeure during the on-site visit. If due to last minute exceptional and unforeseen circumstances or due to force majeure, and in spite of having confirmed his attendance and having made all the organizational and logistical arrangements for his/her participation, the Lead Expert or the expert appointed to represent one of the Subgroup Member States does not arrive for the on-site visit, is considerably delayed in arriving, or is forced to leave prior to its conclusion, the on-site visit shall commence or continue, as applicable, with the participation of the expert representing the other Subgroup Member State and the support of the Technical Secretariat.

If due to such last minute exceptional and unforeseen circumstances or due to force majeure, and in spite of having confirmed their attendance and having made all the organizational and logistical arrangements for their participation, the Lead Experts or the experts appointed in their place to represent both of the Subgroup Member States do not arrive for the on-site visit and it is confirmed or can be inferred that they shall not do so during its planned duration, the on-site visit shall be canceled, without prejudice to the ability of the Technical Secretariat to collect documents and relevant information as was planned for during the visit. In such an eventuality, the on-site visit may be rescheduled, if possible.

24. Absence of the Technical Secretariat due to reasons of force majeure during the on-site visit. If for last-minute, exceptional and unforeseen circumstances or due to force majeure, and in spite of having made all the logistical arrangements for its participation, the Technical Secretariat is considerably delayed in arriving or is unable to arrive, the on-site visit shall commence or proceed, as applicable, with the experts representing the two Subgroup Member States, who shall agree on the moderators for the meetings, or, in the event that only one of them is able to arrive to conduct the on-site visit, with only one expert. In that case, in order for the information gathered during the on-site visit to be taken into consideration in preparing the corresponding draft country report, the expert or experts in attendance during the visit, as applicable, shall convey it in writing to the Technical Secretariat within two weeks following the date on which the on-site visit concludes.

25. Unforeseen circumstances during the on-site visit. Any unforeseen circumstance arising during the on-site visit that affects or is believed could affect the discharging of the agenda agreed upon for the on-site visit or the fulfillment of its objectives in any way shall be resolved through conversations between the Lead Expert of the country under review or the official appointed to support him as the contact authority, the members of the Subgroup, and the Technical Secretariat, ensuring at all times that the objectives of the on-site visit are pursued to the extent that is possible.

IV. MEETINGS WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS AND/OR, *INTER ALIA*, PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS, PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, ACADEMICS, OR RESEARCHERS

26. Meetings with civil society organizations previously submitting documents in accordance with the Rules of Procedure and related measures. In the event that civil society organizations have presented documents pursuant to the terms of Article 34(b) of the Rules of Procedure, the schedule, the Methodology, and other decisions adopted by the Committee in connection with the Round, meetings shall be held between the members of the Subgroup, the Technical Secretariat, and the representative(s) of those civil society organizations, and the event shall be placed on the agenda.

The country under review shall transmit the corresponding invitation which shall indicate the time, place, and other details related to the respective meeting(s).

27. Possibility of inviting other civil society organizations and/or, *inter alia*, private sector organizations, professional associations, academics, or researchers to meetings. The initial proposal for the agenda sent to the country under review in accordance with provision 13 of this Methodology and/or the proposed revised agenda that the country under review returns in response to the previous version pursuant to provision 14, may propose inviting civil society organizations other than those identified in the previous provision, or organizations representing the private sector, professional associations, academics, or researchers in areas related to the topics under review in the Round, to attend meetings with the members of the Subgroup and the Technical Secretariat.

The holding or otherwise of each of the meetings proposed pursuant to this paragraph shall be agreed upon with the country under review, sufficiently in advance of the commencement date of the on-site visit, during the process of coordination and definition of the agenda referred to in provision 14 of this Methodology.

The meetings with civil society organizations referred to in provision 26 and the meetings provided for by this provision may be held together, as agreed to during the process of coordination and definition of the agenda referred to in provision 14 of this Methodology.

The country under review shall transmit the invitation to the organizations, associations, academics, or researchers agreed on in accordance with the previous paragraph, indicating the specific topics to be addressed at the meeting and suggesting that, in the event they accept the invitation, they submit a written summary of the information on those topics they plan to share at the meeting.

The country under review shall inform, as applicable, the organization, association, academic, or researcher of the time, place, and other details of the respective meeting.

The summaries received shall be made available to the country under review, the members of the Subgroup, and the other members of the Committee.

28. Participation of the country under review at meetings with civil society organizations and/or, *inter alia*, private sector organizations, professional associations, academics, or researchers. The country under review may attend the meetings civil society organizations and/or, *inter alia*, private sector organizations, professional associations, academics, or researchers referred to in provisions 26 and 27 of this Methodology.

V. FUNDING FOR ON-SITE VISITS AND OTHER RELATED ORGANIZATIONAL AND LOGISTICAL MATTERS

29. Voluntary contributions for the financing of on-site visits. According to what is established in recommendation 8 from the Third Meeting of the Conference of States Parties to the MESICIC and the Report of Buenos Aires, the States Parties shall consider making voluntary contributions to guarantee funding for the expenses demanded by on-site visits, thus ensuring their financial sustainability and the uninterrupted pursuit of them. For these purposes, the Technical Secretariat of the MESICIC may also negotiate and receive voluntary contributions from States not parties to the Convention, international financial agencies, international cooperation agencies, and all other contributions that may be received in accordance with the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the OAS General Secretariat.

The contributions for the financing of on-site visits shall be made without conditions related to the nature of the review process or its results, nor expectations of influence, and they shall be used as indicated in provision 3, paragraphs (a) and (b), of the Report of Buenos Aires.

30. Consideration by Subgroup Member States of the possibility of financing the travel expenses of their respective experts to participate in on-site visits. As a contribution to the process of mutual cooperation within the MESICIC and to the financial sustainability of on-site visits, the States shall endeavor to fund the travel expenses of their Lead Experts or of the experts they appoint in their place to attend the on-site visits at which they are to participate as members of the respective Subgroups.

In each case, in the communication sent to the Lead Experts of the two States that comprise the corresponding Subgroup in accordance with the terms of provision 12(a) of this Methodology, the Technical Secretariat shall ask whether the respective State is in a position to finance, either totally or partially, the travel expenses of the respective expert.

The Lead Experts of the Member States of the respective Subgroup shall pursue the formalities within their power and bring their good offices to bear so that the their State gives timely and due consideration to the possibility of financing the expenses referred to in this provision. If that is not possible, the procedure indicated in the following provision shall be followed.

31. Financing of travel expenses from voluntary contributions. In the event that a State is unable to finance, either totally or partially, the travel expenses of its Lead Expert or of the person appointed in his place to attend a particular on-site visit, all those expenses or the uncovered part thereof, as applicable, shall be met by resources received in the form of voluntary contributions.

In this last event, the expenses shall be covered in accordance with established OAS provisions and procedures for such situations, and the Technical Secretariat shall coordinate the arrangements necessary for the purpose directly with the respective expert.

32. Logistics services from the country under review. In order to facilitate the development of the on-site visit, the country under review shall provide the following logistics services:

- a) Assign a motor vehicle to transport the experts representing the Subgroup Member States and the Technical Secretariat and, if applicable, the interpreter(s), from the airport to the hotel where they are to stay, and back to the airport, as well as to the various locations where meetings are to be held during the on-site visit.
- b) Assign a room to hold meetings, computers with internet access and a printer, and provide photocopying services, during the days of the on-site visit.
- c) Recommend the hotel option(s) that it deems most appropriate for the expert members of the Subgroup and the Technical Secretariat and, if applicable, the interpreters(s), taking into consideration, *inter-alia*, such factors as the locations where meetings are to be held during the on-site visit and providing them with the necessary assistance in making hotel reservations.
- d) To the extent possible, assist in obtaining visas for the individuals who are to participate in the corresponding on-site visit.

33. Interpretation services during the on-site visit. The Technical Secretariat shall coordinate and finance, using the voluntary contributions received, the interpretation services that are strictly necessary during the execution of the meetings within the framework of the on-site visits.

VI. INCLUSION OF INFORMATION RELATED TO THE ON-SITE VISIT IN THE COUNTRY REPORT

34. Inclusion of information related to the on-site visit in the country report. In the country report covering the country under review, the Committee shall:

a) Indicate whether the country under review granted or did not grant its consent for the corresponding on-site visit to be conducted according to the terms of section I of this Methodology. In the event that a country under review has not granted its consent for an on-site visit and has expressed the reasons for that decision, the report shall refer to those reasons.

b) In the event that the country under review has granted its consent according to the terms of section I of this Methodology and, consequently, the on-site visit was carried out:

i. Report on the date on which it took place and the participants in representation of the members of the Subgroup and the Technical Secretariat.

ii. In all appropriate sections of the country report, include references to the information from the on-site visit that are considered relevant, including information related to:

- The potential difficulties in implementing the Convention provisions under review and/or the recommendations formulated by the Committee in the previous round(s) on which follow-up is being conducted.
- The areas in which the country under review may require or could benefit from technical cooperation.
- The good practices identified by the country under review in the topics under analysis, knowledge of which could be of use to other States Parties and thus contribute to the strengthening of cooperation and the exchange of information and experiences among the States Parties.

iii. It shall include, as an annex to the country report, the agenda of meetings held within the framework of the on-site visit and the names of the institutions or organizations that participated at each.

c) It shall also indicate any other information considered relevant in connection with the respective on-site visit.

VII. DISSEMINATION

35. Dissemination of the holding of the on-site visit. Upon the conclusion of the on-site visit, a written communiqué may be prepared for publication in the media, internet, and any other channels deemed appropriate.

The communiqué may refer to such matters as the Convention, the MESICIC, the country under review's adherence to them, the topics under analysis in the respective Round, the nature and objectives of the on-site visit, the dates on which it was held, the Subgroup Member States and the experts representing them, the agenda, the institutions, organizations, and individuals that participated in the various meetings held, and the subsequent steps to be taken after the on-site visit to continue the review process that is to conclude with the Committee's adoption of the corresponding country report within the framework of its next meeting.

Bearing in mind the nature of the on-site visit as part of the review process and the objectives of that process as stipulated in provisions 2 and 3 of this Methodology and in the Rules of Procedure, in no case may the communiqué include statements or quotes expressing claims, pronouncements, conclusions, or recommendations on the substantive topics addressed by the on-site visit or leading or with the potential to lead to the erroneous inference that the on-site visit reached conclusions or formulated pronouncements on those issues, which are solely carried out by the plenary of the Committee and are made through the country report adopted at the end of the review process, in accordance with the terms of the Rules of Procedure, the Methodology, and the other decisions adopted in connection with the corresponding round.

36. Abstention from making public statements by the representatives of the Subgroup Member States and the Technical Secretariat during the on-site visit. Without prejudice to the terms of the preceding provision, the representatives of the Subgroup Member States and of the Technical Secretariat participating in the on-site visit shall refrain from making public statements, in the media or through any other means, regarding the on-site visit, either prior to, during, or after the visit, particularly taking into account what is established in provision 8 of this Methodology and the nature and objectives of on-site visits referred to therein as well as in provisions 3 and 4.

VIII. RESOLUTION OF ISSUES ARISING IN CONNECTION WITH ON-SITE VISITS

37. Resolution by the Committee of issues arising in connection with on-site visits. Any issue arising in connection with on-site visits and requiring a pronouncement or decision from the Committee, following consultation and the authorization of the Chair, shall be placed before the Committee's consideration, within the framework of its plenary meetings, by the Technical Secretariat.